



COMMUNITY - COMMENTS

VOL. XXIV NO. 3

WHOLENESS - IN INTERACTION

- INDIVIDUAL - FAMILY - GROUP - COMMUNITY

SOCIETY - NATURE



Community Service, Inc.

Yellow Springs, Ohio

AN ISSUE ON HOW TO RELATE ALL TOGETHER
WHILE MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF EACH

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COMMUNITY

COMMENTS

individuality & community

PROPHETIC VISION OF D. H.

LAWRENCE AND ARTHUR E. MORGAN

It is significant that two students of civilization from such different backgrounds as D. H. Lawrence and Arthur E. Morgan should come to very similar and unusual positions in their analyses of a fundamental issue of civilization. Both believed that certain presuppositions characterize and harm the life and relationships both of our dominant western society and of the revolutionary movements and communes that were outgrowths of and reactions to that society. Lawrence advanced this thesis at length in such of his books as his Studies in Classic American Literature, in part inspired by the writing of Walt Whitman, who was also part of the background inspiration of Arthur Morgan. Arthur Morgan and D. H. Lawrence alike sought to penetrate deeply into realities of which people had been unaware, by careful observation and relating vision to underlying realities of life.

Mary Freeman in her D. H. Lawrence, A Basic Study of His Ideas put this succinctly in writing:

Lawrence soon concluded that abundant life was not to be found in the main currents of our culture, neither in dedication to material progress nor in support of impotent cliches. He found inadequate also current versions of social reform and revolution. It seemed to him

that they failed to free themselves from the limitations of past ideals, and, as a result took forms too lean, too barren. Neither our established culture nor our ready-made panaceas for its ills appeared conducive to more abundant life.¹

What was this message as it relates practically to our endeavors to build a better social order, particularly in community and interpersonal relationships?

Eugene Goodheart in his The Utopian Vision of D. H. Lawrence expressed it that

in Lawrence is the coincidence of two impulses: toward self responsibility ...and the impulse toward true human community. When society demands total commitment, it is in the very act of destroying itself.

He then quotes Lawrence:

There must be brotherly love, a wholeness of humanity. But there must also be pure, separate individuality, separate and proud.²

This perception of Lawrence's corresponds to what anthropologist Paul Radin observed to be characteristic of those folk societies that had the greatest capacity for survival and endurance, that in those societies

the individual and the group are interlocking at certain points, ... yet sufficiently autonomous units to resist submergence of one by the other.

And this was made possible, Radin wrote, due to the existence of a larger configuration within which this relationship was maintained.³

In other words, the family, the community, the church or the nation must not

take the place of a person's direct relationship to the universe, however that might be conceived. Similarly the organic social groups of which people are part must also live in such relationship. The individual's relationship with these groups and their members must not crowd out his own unique personal relationship to the wider reality of mankind and nature.

Albert Einstein expressed a similar view with regard to his own life:

I gang my own gait and have never belonged to my country, my home, my friends, or even to my immediate family, with my whole heart; in the face of all these ties I have never lost an obstinate sense of detachment, of the need for solitude—a feeling which increases with the years.

And he observed that such a person

is largely independent of the opinions, habits and judgements of his fellows and avoids temptation to take his stand on such insecure foundations.⁴

Arthur Morgan similarly emphasized this quality of detachment in his The Future of Community

Mediocrity is at home in the crowd. The discriminating mind and spirit make their best growths when they have opportunity for periods of quiet and solitude.⁵

Elsewhere he wrote:

One of the chief dangers to civilization today is the tendency of people to feel so strongly that they must be like everyone else that individuality and initiative are killed. (1925)

For the purpose of keeping clear our ultimate aims and of keeping strong our sense of validity in them, it is necessary that we have regular periods of retirement, either alone or with others who have the same purpose. In the quiet and peace of these periods we can renew and refresh loyalty to the ultimate and controlling purpose for which we should live.⁶

In western society the way and the dictates of the social group have been dominant both in the wider society and

in the reactions to it, as in the communes of the past century. Of the latter Charles Nordhoff explained in his Communitistic Societies of the United States:

Some things the communist must surrender; and the most precious of these is solitude.

The man to whom at intervals the faces and voices of his kind become hateful, whose bitterest need is to be sometimes alone—this man need not try communism. For in a well ordered commune there is hardly the possibility of privacy. You are part of a great family, all whose interests must necessarily be in common.⁷

Henri Laserre, a lifetime advocate of cooperative communities, sensed the hazard in this type of community. He raised the issue with Eberhard Arnold with regard to the Society of Brothers:

Is it reason, because God required the whole man, also for community to demand the whole man?

In other words, are all relations of man to God to be established exclusively through the medium of community, or are not there certain phases of the individual's life which can only be related to God directly, and for which the greatest possible freedom should be afforded by the community to the individual?⁸

Deepseated in our national culture is the assumption that the only choices confronting society are between the dominant individualism and a dominant collectivism,* in each case with the individual immersed in and dominated by social pressures of the surrounding society. Thus in our public schools the individual is commonly lost in the collective process. Each extreme is, as it were, the opposite side of the same coin. No real alternative is conceived, only an unsatisfactory compromise or giving way to the extreme of either individualistic anarchism or the commune expunged of individualism. This underlying philosophy is present, for example, in David and Elena French's otherwise able survey of the commune movement, Working Communally. They quote Rosebeth Kantor in discussing the very important aspect of individuality, that of close personal relations with other persons:

Exclusive two-person bonds within a larger group, particularly sexual attachments, represent competition for members' emotional energy and loyalty. The cement of solidarity must extend throughout the group.⁹

And the Frenches continue:

The ultimate resolution of this issue will depend on whether the 'I-spirit' or the 'We-spirit' prevails...communal success depends on the abandonment of individualism in favor of a sense of the wholeness of the group. The alternative-seekers of the 1960s and 1970s carried the 'I-spirit' with them...and they did not achieve their goal.¹⁰

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- * "A very important part of the conflict of value systems in the United States can be economically summarized in terms of tension between values centering around the concept of the responsible individual personality versus values organized around categorical organic conceptions." Robin Williams, American Society, p. 440.

But all the communes of the past failed to one degree or another, as Martin Buber has shown in his Paths in Utopia. The fault lay not in an adverse surrounding environment, but in the vision, the pattern prevailing then and now, both in communes and surrounding culture. It was expressed in a letter to the author from a man who with others made many valiant efforts at intentional community development. He wrote that they had come to the conclusion that "human nature is not yet ready for community." Should we not rather question whether the conventional concept of community is right for human nature? A deeper analysis of the history and experience of the commune movement is required.

The Origins of Individuality

Those who regard individualism as the underlying problem of society tend to look for its beginnings in childhood and the family. It is in the intense loving relationship of the parent-child relationship that individuality and the "I" spirit, as contrasted with

the community "we" spirit, gets its start. The obvious alternative is the communal bringing up of children. In his book Marriage Through the Ages, O. E. James points out this is a reversion to the herd character of lower animals and societies:

This, of course, inevitably leads to the transcendence of individual personality by the organized community and the making of social values the only true value.... The herd instinct, however is not distinctively human; its values are not the values of persons.¹¹

If we supplant the family by the apparatus of public educations or the commune we displace a universal of human societies with a condition beyond which most higher mammals have advanced, so important is the personal attention and love of parents to the child. The newly developing personality of the child needs to start not on the mass assembly line of the nursery, nor in the womb shared by a dozen other fetuses; but as an individual focus of parental love in the family.

Urie Bronfenbrenner in his Two Worlds of Childhood, contrasting the complementary values of child development in communist Russia and in the west, shows that in Russia there is a growing recognition of the important role of the family. Whereas one Russian writer asserted that "the family as an economic unity, having fused with other families and become incorporated into a larger economic collective, will dissolve within the context of the future social commune," Bronfenbrenner goes on to show widespread recognition by others of the "irreplaceable role of parental relationships in developing the emotional life of the child." Thus the sociologist Karchev asserted "Children brought up without the participation of the family are at far greater risk of one sided or retarded development..." So Bronfenbrenner finds the pendulum in Russia shifting from group "dependency and conformity, toward new configurations more conducive to the emergence of individuality and independence."¹²

So the family itself must be a living organism, within which the individuality of the child finds its origin. From that small family world the in-

fant needs in progressive steps to emerge into the enlarging world of experience and association—the small neighborhood, the community, and then the progressively larger society. Breaking one of these steps leaves a gap in personality development. It is for this reason that the biological family and the small community are the two universals of social organization in human societies. With the disintegration of the small community the family begins to disintegrate. In consequence the isolated modern nuclear family is breaking up.*

* An important study was made to determine what were the characteristics of families in American cities that had survived without symptoms of social breakdown. It was found that such families had associated themselves with a number of other such families in close bonds like those of small communities, giving them mutual aid, common cultural values, and a milieu for supportive child development. This was reported in Zimmerman and Cervantes' Successful American Families.

The Common Denominator

Then how are we to achieve the new society, the new community, the new family and the new individuality at the base of the new society? By what kind of interpersonal relations can we attain harmony of individuality and community? In mathematical terms it is simple; to add fractions it is necessary to reduce them to their common denominator. The common denominator of people in their interrelationships, of social groups and of nations, is their universal aspect, their more fundamental being. Lawrence's insight is that at the level of the deepest self of people they can relate to each other without mutual destruction or loss of individuality; but trying to impose unity upon diverse people at the more superficial level, whether by love, by coercion or group processes, is to do violence, to make human anthills or beehives, as in Orwell's book, 1984. Moreover, coercion creates tensions and hatred between people close to each other, whether lovers or parents and children.

Lawrence wrote:

Men are not free when they are doing just what they like. The moment you do just what you like, there is nothing you care about doing. Men are only free when they are doing what the deepest self likes.... Because the deepest self is way down, and the conscious self is an obstinate monkey.... The true liberty will only begin when Americans discover IT, and proceed to fulfill IT. IT being the deepest whole self of man, the self in its wholeness, not idealistic halfness.¹³

The wholeness of a person cannot be achieved within the overriding dominance of either the surrounding capitalist or the utopian conception of the communal life. For the local community, the family and the nation are all but fractions of a person's real world; as Lawrence expressed it, "every living thing is related to every other living thing."¹⁴ This emphasis on wholeness as the needed way was also central in Arthur Morgan's thinking, and in Martin Buber's, to whom the community was also very important. In his Good and Evil Buber wrote "good can only be done with the whole soul, ... proceeding from its highest forces..."

This prophetic vision of Lawrence's was not destined to remain only an abstract hope of a man famished for it in the desert of western civilization. He wrote,

It certainly changed me forever...it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization...

I had looked over the world for something that would strike me as religious.... It is curious that one should get a sense of religion from the Red Indians, having failed to get it from Hindus, or Sicilian Catholics or Cinghalese...

It was a vast old religion, greater than anything we know: All is god. But it is not the pantheism we are accustomed to, which expresses itself as "God is everywhere, god is in everything." In the oldest religion, everything was alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive. There were only deeper and deeper streams of life, vibrations of life more and



more vast...the whole life effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos...To come into immediate felt contact. This effort into sheer naked contact without an intermediary or mediator is the real meaning of religion...

It was a vast and pure religion, without idols or images, even mental ones. It is the oldest religion, a cosmic religion the same for all peoples, not broken up into specific gods or saviors and systems...and is therefore greater and deeper than any god religion.¹⁵

And how is all this relevant to interpersonal relations in community and to the organic life of communities?

Another writer defined this approach to a good social order as follows:

It is difficult for us all to work together in a single minded sort of way. We are far too full of our own plans and ideas; and our plans are all so different, they get entangled and cause a kind of "no-man's land" of entanglement. Until we have all learned to see God's plan clearly too, and to keep it clear before our mind's eye, we are not really fit for corporate work. If we become one as to general desire for something, and at the same time remain many as to our minds, we can't expect to do anything very great and valuable, and we shall be just wasting time. So, the first step in everything is to find that corporate plan; and that can only be found with God. (the all-encompassing totality of which all are part)... Corporate god-mindedness can only come through personal god-mindedness.¹⁶

If people are in this way oriented and attuned to the universe inclusive of all mankind and nature, rather than primarily to each other in family, group, community or nation, only then can they be truly attuned to each other and effectively integrated in community.

Not only the individual person, but also the family, the community and the nation need the same relationship from each other for them to attain indiv-

iduality free from harmful imposition, warping and domination from the others. Each needs its integrity and its own orientation to the universe. On the basis of this kind of integrity, rather than merging into the communal mass, each is the better neighbor, part of the nation and world as well as milieu to the parts that make it up. This is the message of the Community Service anthology Bottom-up Democracy.

These are general and abstract statements. A few examples will help illustrate some of the ways egotistic individuality can be transcended without communal domination.

Some American Indians were meeting in Yellow Springs, and they were joined by Thomas Banyacya, flying in from an intertribal meeting at Denver. He told how when that meeting began they started out as the white man does with the usual agenda of business and were soon in the spirit of factionalism and semi-futility that characterizes so many political procedures. Banyacya then called the attention of the meeting to this fact and suggested they start over again on the Indians' basis beginning with their orientation to the universe and the powers of life, addressing those powers and giving verbal recognition to them. After this the proceedings developed with power and good spirit.

In a very different context, there was a bitter labor-management conflict in Philadelphia years ago, and the city was suffering from the deadlock. A Quaker with standing in the city, Will Biddle, was asked to come and see what he could do. He did in essence what Banyacya had done in Denver: He asked that the representatives of the two warring factions join in a half hour of silence before beginning business. After the silence the conflict was resolved quickly and in good spirit.

In still another kind of circumstance this same procedure worked. A young coal miner was asked to take over the pastorate of a church that no trained minister had been able to cope with, for it was so rent with strife as to seem hopeless. The miner announced at the Sunday service that the midweek

meeting would be in complete silence, with no talking. He had had no experience of this, but knew that at the level of communication in the community verbal exchange would be ineffectual. At the midweek meeting, which was fully attended, members of the church were so moved after a long period of silence that reconciliation developed and the church progressively became a power of life and vitality. They went into the level at which the conflict dominance of both ego and the community's conflict spirit were both transcended.

These are isolated examples of a principle of life in expression, whether in words, song, dance or drama. Their part in society depends on an overall comprehension of reality and of relationships. It requires a rationale, a sense of what the Indians, the Quaker, the young Methodist minister did as based on something real, not just playing games that happen to work. It means that attunement to the larger reality and to each other is necessary for sound relationships—between individuals and community, between groups and between people and the rest of their environment.

These anecdotes demonstrate the application of a principle of life in circumstances for large groups. The same underlying principle needs to be expressed in an undercurrent of everyday life and interpersonal relationships.

The depth aspect of human life and interpersonal relationships is too generally lacking in white American society. As contrasted to the American Indian world, D. H. Lawrence likened the white world to flies excluded from beautiful fruits and other foods by a cellophane covering, walking over the cellophane surface and not able to penetrate beneath it. Martin Buber wrote that it is not the quantity but the quality of interpersonal relationships that is lacking.* An Israeli kibbutz leader once commented that in their community they had become aware that they were strangers eating at the same table. The "Lonely Crowd" of the dominant society extends also to many a commune. Some people with experience with traditional Indians have remarked on the depths of their silence sitting together while their personalities were

communizing and eliminating all loneliness. In much talking people may be erecting barriers to the deeper reaches of interpersonal relationships. Arthur Morgan, when a young man surveying in the remote forests of the north, was joined by a Chippewa Indian of great character. Neither could speak the other's language, but they sat in silence so full of communication at the deeper levels that this was one of the more significant educational experiences he had to look back upon.

This philosophy lies in part behind the intentional community endeavors that arose from the work of Arthur Morgan and Community Service. A sociologist who made a study of Celó community commented that it was an anachronism in that its longevity stems from the opposite condition from that commonly assumed to be necessary to the survival of communes, that it was based on a wide horizon of diversity and not on narrow conformity of ideology. The Vale community has in its constitution that there shall be no discrimination for race, creed or color. But the diversity of both had in their conception a deeper base of unity, such as D. H. Lawrence defined. They and a number of other communities with similar values have been stable, with one degree or another of interracial composition, and outgoing in their involvement with the surrounding society as contrasted with most others. Similar are May Valley and Alpha in the west and Tanguy and Bryn Gweled in the East. They do not conform to the stereotypes of a commune, they are not conceived as utopian communities but as open ended living organisms with a life made up of the lives of diverse members, evolving, changing, responding and part of nature and the order of the universe. We can say from such communities as these that there is practical evidence for the community and civilization philosophy of D. H. Lawrence and Arthur E. Morgan.

* "A real community need not consist of people who are perpetually together, but it must consist of people who, precisely because they are comrades, have mutual access to one another and are ready for each other." Martin Buber in "An Experiment That Did Not Fail," from Paths in Utopia, p. 145, Beacon Press..

- by Griscom Morgan

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Quote from Commune Tripping

Someone has arbitrarily divided the Utopian urge into two main categories: A desire for escape and a desire for reconstruction. Both, I think, are present, concurrently, within each person and within each group, but in most individuals one urge tends to dominate. In the forming group, however, these two polarities tend to diffuse because it contains members of both persuasions and, I've observed, they'll stay that way—havens for all convictions, with many attitudes in common, but few or no long-term common goals—unless some catalytic force within the group moves it to become an entirely new and separate entity, something beyond the linear summation of a number of individuals, a new organic thing separate from its parts, in effect a new ego. Where that happens the new entity is actually more a part of each individual—the larger ego coexisting with his own—than he a part of it. He could depart, taking both with him, and the group would not be spiritually less by one. In its highest sense, this is what building a new community means; not collectivising individuals, certainly not to reduce their individuality, but to add a new element to each; to reconstruct what civilization has stolen; to recreate the organic entity which was man's natural heritage before exploitation dominated. And, in the sense that this element, so essential to man's highest potentiality, once existed in our ancestors (the Scottish clans, the medieval city-states and guilds, innumerable village cultures throughout history; and did and often still does exist in so called "primitive" tribes), "community" is less an awaiting of new creation than a heritage to be reclaimed.

Reprinted from
"Commune Tripping"
Bill Grant
--Neverland Community
Newsletter(9/71)



empowerment

Taking and using power is a vital function in a healthy community. Morale depends in part upon people feeling that they are in control of their lives. In a free society members take effective part in decision making and in the maintenance and growth of community values.

In any society there is a mix of power centralization/dispersion and the patterns are diverse. Here in Yellow Springs, for instance, our Village Council determines the rate structure of electricity supplied by the municipal system (which recently pioneered the "life line" concept of relatively low cost for small-amount domestic users). In contrast, real estate prices go up with the urbanizing market and home renters face inflation that has driven some low-income people from the village. There appears to be no community control in this area.

How do we move from the sense and the actualities of impotence toward effective use of power in our lives and in our communities? Our attitudes about our own self worth and effectiveness in dealing with other individuals on a day-to-day basis greatly influence this assessment of our degree of autonomy and capability on the larger scene. As I feel incapable as a person to govern my own life, it seems impossible that I should have influence in affairs of state. In contrast, when I know who I am and feel confident in myself, then I feel I can grapple effectively with the larger (and not-so-large) social issues. Let's not pretend that this is the whole story, but it certainly is one basic chapter. And it needs attention.

The Community Movement over the years has been concerned with personal and social effectiveness - with a sense of local empowerment. Where a people has sensed that there could not be fulfillment of its visions in the larger society, some have chosen to strike out and establish their own communities - American pioneers did this in many ways, affirming their rights and autonomy in their individual lives and micro-societies. It is as true of the Plymouth

Colony as of Stephen's Farm, Twin Oaks, and the Reba Place Fellowship.

These communities have developed processes and approaches of personal inter-relationship that have proved effective. Clear pathways for action of communication, and direct dealing in important matters have often been stressed. At Twin Oaks gossip (indirect communication) is forbidden and the aggrieved seeks out the aggriever in private. Self and group criticism have been used by societies as diverse as modern China, the 19th century Oneida Community, Synanon drug therapy communities, and the Bruderhof. Transactional Analysis (used in some intentional as well as ordinary communities) identifies roles which we use to describe behavior, as an approach to clarifying issues. Quakers employ silence as a tool for attunement in group meetings and also in the process of resolving conflict. Re-evaluation Counseling - again a tool of some intentional communities - focuses on mutual validation of persons and the cathartic "discharge" of distress in helping participants emerge from confused self-concepts into more fully functioning personhood.

All of these systems and devices are aimed at strengthening individual self-awareness and capacity to deal with others from a position of personal confidence and strength. It is this perspective of feeling confidence in one's self and, consequently being effective in actions with others, which is so important in building morale and strength in community. Approaches to developing this intra- and inter-personal strength and capacity to use power cover the rainbow! There's no royal road to effective communication and learning how to gain control of self and community; the important and very optimistic message is that it's possible in this day and age. Very likely within your own community you can find relatively effective groups of people who are giving effect to their hopes and visions for a better life, employing effective inter-personal processes in community action. While their style and goals may not be yours, you may be able to gain insights from them, and then go on to develop your own methods.

Where can we find guidelines and examples for increasing interpersonal effect and roads to empowerment? The following are suggestive; there are many writers and sources for direction and ideas:

(*Asterisk means available from Community Service)

*THE JOYFUL COMMUNITY. Benjamin Zablocki. 1971. Penguin Books, Baltimore (#A1325). \$1.95.

An account of the Bruderhof, a vigorous theocracy with highly communal lifestyle. Includes abundant descriptions in lively anecdotal form of how members inter-relate. An exciting and demanding model of people who have achieved a great deal of group autonomy through an effective social order.

MOVING TOWARD A NEW SOCIETY. Gowan, Lakey, Meyer & Taylor. 1976. New Society Press, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19143. \$3.50.

A radical critique of our society with strategies for non-violent change and community empowerment. Effective personal relationships are implicit throughout, and are dealt with specifically at the end. It is a book filled with hope and expectation, and it is a tool for those who would work for their own and societal autonomy.

CREATING THE FUTURE; A Guide to Living and Working for Social Change. Beitz and Washburn. 1974. Bantam Books, N.Y. (#8354). \$1.95.

CREATING THE FUTURE; A GUIDE TO LIVING AND WORKING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. Beitz and Washburn. 1974. Bantam Books, N.Y. (#8354). \$1.95.

A manual for empowerment work! Full of references to information, help, ideas, tools; "A catalog of opportunities." This is a book about engagement - companion to the one above:

I'M OK - YOU'RE OK. Thomas Harris. 1973. Avon Books, N.Y. (#14662). \$1.95.

Presents Transactional Analysis (T. A.) as a method of clearly defining and analysing interactions between

people. A consequence is more accurate communication and a basis for improved relationships.

PARENT EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING; The "No-Lose" Program for Raising Responsible Children. Thomas Gordon. 1970. P. H. Wyden, N.Y. 1970

PARENT EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING; THE "NO-LOSE" PROGRAM FOR RAISING RESPONSIBLE CHILDREN. Thomas Gordon. 1970. P. H. Wyden, N.Y.

How to work for mutually acceptable solutions to problems of parent-and-child through exploration of options and negotiation of agreements. How to listen and how to talk so you get heard. An alternative to "permissiveness" and to "authoritarian" approaches, which have often missed the mark.

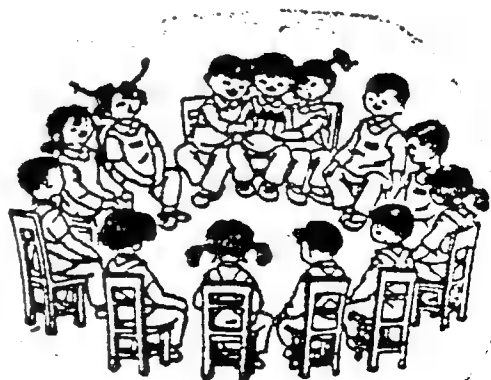
THE INTIMATE ENEMY. George Bach. 1968. Avon Books, N.Y.

Shows how adults can have "no lose" conflicts, complete with rules for fair fighting. An adult equivalent of P.E.T., above. Both of these books can be powerful tools in increasing understanding and capability to negotiate for more effective use of power.

PERSON TO PERSON; The Problem of Being Human. Rogers and Stevens. 1967. Pocket Books, N.Y. (#78988). \$1.75

Profound statements on personhood and basic issues of individual empowerment. Ties in with approaches to value and action in hearty, optimistic ways.

-by Pete Hill



small steps to happiness

Aloe is a Walden Two community in North Carolina which is trying to create a non-punishing, egalitarian society. Some of the techniques we are using in working toward this goal involve restructuring our physical and social environment to give community members equal access to resources and opportunities within the community. Three kinds of resources we have thought about are: 1) work and the opportunity for rest and relaxation, 2) satisfying social and personal relationships, and 3) things that money can buy, such as food, physical objects, and health care. We are using the structures of a Walden Two community--a planner-manager system of government and a labor credit system--to give members equal access to work and leisure, and we are working on systems of giving members equal access to things that money can buy. It is more difficult to offer people equal access to satisfying social and personal relationships, and it is this area that I am going to focus on here.

A major step in offering people equal access to satisfying personal relationships is the creation of a non-punishing social environment. We are using a variety of techniques to help us move in this direction, and I will describe a few of them. First, we use only positive reinforcement, not punishment, in relating to each other. In practice this means making positive suggestions for changing behavior we don't like rather than complaining. It also means that we prefer not to use confrontation tactics in dealing with situations we don't like. Most of our work in this area has been in changing our verbal behavior, trying to change the things we say to ourselves and to other people, since we punish each other a lot through our language.

Changing our verbal behavior is related to the second technique we use, avoiding making moral judgements about the behavior of others. Rather than referring to any behavior as "right" or "wrong," we prefer to state what we

like or dislike. When people say that a behavior is "right" or "wrong" it seems to follow that everyone "ought" to do certain things. This ignores the fact that people are different, and that our prior conditioning has left us with different sets of likes and dislikes. It's easy to punish ourselves and others by saying that we "ought" to do something, for example, stop smoking, not eat so much, get more exercise, stop procrastinating, stop bitching, etc. But it is not easy to change behaviors like these, and we can spend much time feeling bad or angry at other people if we say that we or they "ought" to be different from what we or they are.

A third technique that we use is to remember that we don't dislike people, but only certain behavior. This is not easy to do, but we have found that we can always find something we like in a person if we try, and that we can attend to these positive aspects rather than to the things which he or she does that we don't care for.

Attending to things we like is a fourth technique we use to keep ourselves happy. The human mind can only focus on a few things at once; if we are paying attention to those things in the environment that we like, it is much more difficult to be unhappy than if we are attending to those things in the environment which we dislike. Several of us have had very positive experiences using this technique when we were in a situation that our prior conditioning had led us to believe would be very unpleasant, but, by attending to those things that we liked in the situation, we were able not only to feel good about ourselves but also to help others around us feel happy as well. This is a technique that Pollyanna used in the classic book by Eleanor Porter. Even though "looking on the bright side" of any situation seems to be naive, it works amazingly well to help people stay happy in situations that appear from "other perspectives" to be extremely difficult.

It's easier to attend to things we like if there are a number of attractive alternatives to choose from in both the physical and social environment. In the social environment we

have found that the more people we like, the easier it is to find someone to be with if we need some companionship. If we become attached to one other person, and that person is not available, we are left alone, but if we have several people in our environment who are supportive of us, we won't be stranded if one of them is not available just when we need someone. This principle also operates on a group level for work situations. There are times when a job that is scheduled to be done can't be done for some reason. If there are other jobs which can be done, then it is easy to shift gears and accomplish something in a different area rather than feel frustrated because the priority work couldn't be attended to.

The final technique I want to mention is that we are working to increase the things that we like. The more things we like in our environment, the greater the number of attractive alternatives available to us. We do this both by bringing more things that we like into our environment, and by changing dislikes into likes. Changing dislikes into likes is not easy to do, but we have found that as we increase our happiness in some areas, we find specific dislikes less important to us.

How well are these techniques working? Although it's clear that we haven't reached utopia yet, some of us are happier than we used to be, much more of the time. We have to keep practicing. In the meantime we like to share what we are learning in order to help others get closer to the dream too.

- Sierra Aloe



on leadership

LEADERSHIP AS AN ORGANIC PART OF COMMUNITY

The following paragraphs are taken from a letter written by Warren Stetzel of Raven Rocks about one year ago in response to questions asked him by one of our staff members who visited that community. At the time Warren wrote this he did not know it would be more widely read, but he has given his permission for us to print these excerpts.

Jane Morgan

The very heart of the new movement these days in community, economics, sex—whatever—is what we would call an organic or organismic approach, to replace the now-mired mechanistic approach...

When I spent the long time studying education and schools, I had to conclude at the end of the effort that for all the language to the contrary, every thriving experimental school that we encountered had a central figure, a charismatic leader if you want to call it that. Sometimes this leader was by his own method obscured in a committee, but he was nevertheless there. Sometimes he was, as Neil managed to be at Summerhill, non-directive. But he was there, and every effort to borrow Neil's method around the world without Neil or a similar leader seems to have fallen short...

A community is not an addition of equal people. Community is an active interaction of varied people, acting as an organism in which "inequalities" are the basis for creative mutual advance and advantage. One of the best, and we think most accurate, perceptions...is that hierarchy is a natural organic phenomenon, AND that of all those in the hierarchy the one who is most subject to all the others is the leader. Certainly this is true of any leader who is worth his salt. Only if seen and understood in the barest mechanical terms can the leader be described as the one who influences all the others. A good leader, one who understands the uses

and abuses of charisma, is influenced by everyone, subject to their best interests. I think we have been through a period in human history when abuses of charisma would make most of us want never to see any more of it! These abuses arise from the fact that "leaders" are raised and trained in a society which has little grasp of the organic nature of leadership, its roots in the group, etc... Quakers today [for example] interpret what went on in the quaking Meeting as the approach of God to one of the Individuals, whereas it was the Meeting which drew and focused that approach, with a message coming NOT from but through some of the members. By speaking, they played their function. "God" did not speak to these "individuals." These people for a moment had forfeited their individuality, their separateness, and spoke the message Of the Meeting, For the Meeting.

So with leaders. And in our mechanistic times, we did not see that. So leaders misunderstood themselves. And they abused their roles. Meanwhile, others to protect themselves from bad leaders sought other ways to organize. Two things I would say of most of these efforts: one is impressed that most of the members are more interested in preventing others from becoming leaders than they are in forgoing leadership for themselves (in other words, there is some power struggle because no one really understands the nature of power); and those organizations thrive (1) in which a leader of sorts emerges no matter how invisible his approach and (2) in which this leadership frees and employs the creative energies of others.

I would say that the effort to have human society without leaders is a little like growing a Christmas tree without its "leader,"—or use the root as an example, it matters not. All the same thing—it is not organic. The good fortune of the Christmas tree is that it does not get itself hung up in the mechanistic separation of its parts and hence avoids pointless and disruptive arguments about who is really running this show, the root or the "leader.".....

As "individuals" we see ourselves as part of an organism, and believe that unless we permit organism (which calls for widely varied organs or parts, interacting but not aping each other) we will never have community. But not only do "individuals" make up the parts of living community, but so do groups of people. It is something like the cells that make up the liver, and the different cells from liver cells that we require to make a mind. If some of us are trying something at Raven Rocks that we are not aware is being tried; or at least so deliberately, elsewhere, it may be our wish to distinguish "organs" within the larger community or social organism. We are trying not only to welcome the individual difference that the community organism requires; we are trying to welcome group difference, the difference of groups of individuals.

Warren Stetzel
Raven Rocks, O.



"Man is both gregarious and a solitary animal, as much made for society as for solitude, and as much for solitude as for society. His true life, in a healthy state, is an alternation from one to the other in due proportion....There is something wrong with him whose lonely interviews with nature make him dislike to meet men; something wrong with him whose associations with men unfit him to enjoy retirement. The one should send him to the other with renewed relish."

W.R. Alger in
Genius of Solitude
Quoted by Arthur Morgan in
The Community of the Future

homesteading and effective community



Report on Homesteading Workshop

At Community Service we have been concerned to bring the hitherto rather unrelated movements of homesteading and intentional community and communes into effective relationship with each other, conceiving that they are necessary to each other, complementary aspects of the wholeness of life. We have observed that people who went into homesteading in areas where land was cheap too commonly were isolated, their children did not have fellowship with other children with a common culture, and that homesteading did not of itself bring about the mutual aid between families and friends that is characteristic of healthy human societies. On the other hand it has seemed that the home and its "stead" is an important part of the family in community, and without it something was missing to the community.

So we called a conference on "Homesteading in Community" on Saturday April 24th.

A number of points emerged in our workshop. There was agreement that homesteading is hard work - requiring more sustained energy from its participants than does standard urban or sub-urban living, in which much is done for the householders by outside agencies. We didn't get very far with a definition of "homesteading" - there seemed to be agreement that it involved moving onto a property and developing its resources for local use. Did it always include farming? a rural economy? We weren't so unified on that. There was a sense that we were talking about a pattern of establishing residence that is very old and that it is happening in these times, often by folk who have come from a city, with or without rural and subsistence skills.* The importance of having and/or quickly learning skills was stressed - the country is not a place for dilettantes!

A principal theme in discussions was the necessity for cooperation among homesteaders - with examples cited of where people come to grief through trying it in isolation. It is clear that there are many kinds and styles of cooperative action going on in the heartland of America, from old-fashioned communal house-raising to cooperative food buying, machine and tool sharing, into food growing and processing and cooperative education and productive economies. A problem with cooperation seems to be our sense of personal priorities - and how to sustain group ventures carried on by rugged individualists!

Cooperation is one basis for the emergence of a sense of community; a sense often lacking in both urban and rural settings. Warren Henegar, a long-term homesteader from the Indiana uplands, emphasized that the homesteader needs cash income, perhaps \$2000 a year per family. He expressed the hope for the development of county-wide community of homesteaders in his area, where many new homesteaders have been settling in. Gris Morgan emphasized wholeness in conception, as contrasted with the fragmentation of our culture where so many values are considered or worked for without organic or integral relation with each other, such as the wider economy, schools related to the community and life, involvement in the wider society while having a strong fellowship of common purpose - all with relationship to the homestead way of life.

The workshop undertook an exercise of having participants choose among various life styles and values their order of priorities, and there was a surprising degree of unity. Superficial points of differences tended to be reconciled after discussion, as in the issues of inter-dependence and styles of leadership.

Questions of succession of homestead through the generations and patterns of land holding were also considered, as well as how to deal with interpersonal relationships, and isolation of children in a divergent surrounding culture.

The workshop concluded with a re-emphasis of the need for community and comprehensiveness in relationship, purpose and vision. For those who could stay late, there was an additional treat in seeing Rod O'Connor's slides of his thrifty and productive, bio-dynamically managed garden/homestead.

Gris and Pete



NEW PUBLICATION!!!

ALTERNATIVE AMERICA; a Directory of 5000 Alternative lifestyle groups and Organizations. -by Richard Gardner. Resources, Cambridge, Mass 1976. \$4.

The main listing is in zip code order, which is thus a geographical ordering. There are cross references by organizational name and by activities and interests.

Useful for travelers and for those who want to get in touch with others with similar interests. It can be used to get out a mailing list.

"Purpose manifests itself in man inevitably in action. His purpose is not what he believes, what he desires, but what he is and does.

The world fears purpose that is free and fearless: the church imposes its creed, the class imposes its caste, the profession its etiquette, the moralist his fear, the libertine his folly.

Free development demands free purpose and concentrated force. Whenever two or three are gathered together to follow the same purpose in free and conscious cooperation, their force is multiplied. Wherever a hundred are assembled like sheep by the bellwether, their force is disintegrated. A great brotherhood is great only when its component parts are great. Strength lies not in numbers but in purpose.

Unite, all who would build. Master and man, architect and mason, financier and farm laborer all work to the same end, and this is brotherhood.....When capital dominates labor, disintegration takes place; when labor dominates capital, disintegration takes place; when people forget justice, disintegration takes place; the destruction of one is the destruction of all.

Brotherhood to one class is a defensive organization for protection, to another class an offensive organization for pillage, to another it is an organized attempt to preserve the unfit, and to still another a dream of unorganized following of untried theories. None of these know that all men are brothers.

No man is free who commands not himself, no man is free who forgets his brother and who fails his own purpose with all his force.....A man may dwell in squalor who loves beauty and still be free, be defrauded by his brother and still be free, shackled by strangers, beaten and imprisoned, and still be free. For freedom lies not in a man's estate, but in the man himself.

One purpose all men may serve: progress; whether it be with purpose and possessions or purpose and poverty, all serve equally who put their whole force into service. So may all men know they are brothers."

----The Twelve Lessons
Edited by Margaret Cameron